

1 **ABSTRACT**

2 A software licensing system includes a license generator located at a
3 licensing clearinghouse and at least one license server and multiple clients located
4 at a company or entity. When a company wants a software license, it sends a
5 purchase request (and appropriate fee) to the licensing clearinghouse. The license
6 generator at the clearinghouse creates a license pack containing a set of one or
7 more individual software licenses. To prevent the license pack from being copied
8 and installed on multiple license servers, the license generator assigns a unique
9 license pack ID to the license pack and associates the license pack ID with the
10 particular license server in a master license database kept at the licensing
11 clearinghouse. The license generator digitally signs the license pack and encrypts
12 it with the license server's public key. The license server is responsible for
13 distributing the software licenses from the license pack to individual clients.
14 When a client needs a license, the license server determines the client's operating
15 system platform and grants the appropriate license. To prevent an issued license
16 from being copied from one client machine to another, the software license is
17 assigned to a specific client by including a client ID within the license. The
18 software license also has a license ID that is associated with the client ID in a
19 database record kept at the license server. The license server digitally signs the
20 software license and encrypts it using the client's public key. The license is stored
21 locally at the client.